

Tepary Beans

(*Phaseolus acutifolius*)

What are They?

- One of the highest protein and fiber content found in a legume, this bean is an extremely drought resistant and heat tolerant crop, so well adapted to the Sonoran desert, that it is capable of growing off monsoon water alone. Of course, a little extra watering will only increase your yield
- In addition to its incredible heat resistance, Tepary beans are capable of growing well in poor soil
- Somewhat smaller than a pinto bean, these beans take much longer to cook due to their high protein content and are overall much more nutritious

Health Benefits:

- High in fiber, this bean is excellent for the digestive tract
- The small size of these beans and high nutrient content make for a great snack or meal for babies, children, & toddlers
- With such a high protein content, this bean makes for a filling meal and a lasting full. It is also good for muscle repair and maintenance



History:

- This vine is native to North America and in the US, it's found in the Southwest
- This plant has historically been grown as a sustainable source of food in the Sonoran Desert



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When to grow:

- If you plan on taking advantage of the plants natural drought resistance and want to grow this crop in the most sustainable fashion, then plant these beans in the summer and wait for the monsoon rains to water this plant. One rain is enough to germinate these fast growing beans. Provided it's not an exceptionally dry summer, monsoon rains are enough for this plant.
- If you want to start your plants a little bit early and collect for a longer period, then plant in the spring as the weather warms and occasionally water. Be careful not to over water

How to Plant:

- Plant about half an inch into the soil and about 8 inches apart
- If the vine is given a structure to grow along, it will stretch out, otherwise the plant will grow as a low and shrub like



How to Harvest:

- Wait for bean pods to dry and collect the dried beans held within, by breaking open the thin bean-pod
- Dried beans hold very well and should be held in a dry place until cooked

Miscellaneous:

- This plant is very much adapted to the Sonoran Desert and all of it's environmental conditions. This plant can grow well in poor soil and with little water. As a result, the plant doesn't like to grow in conditions that provide it with plenty of water or soil with high nitrogen levels. Both of these factors can reduce yield in Tepary bean plants
- The Nitrogen Fixation that occurs in the swolled bumps located on this plants roots, known as root nodules, allow the plant to absorb Nitrogen from the air and use to grow. When the plants roots eventually die off, the nitrogen is added to the soil, which makes other plants grow better



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